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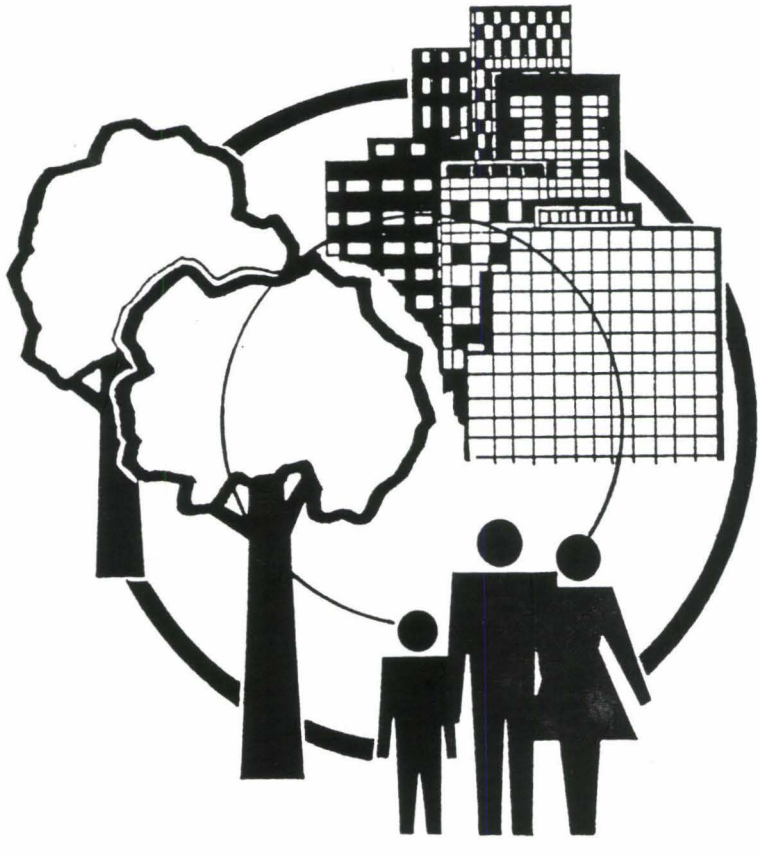
REEVES

# HUMAN RESOURCE PROGRAMS



## FOR A "WORKFARE" SOCIETY

# HUMAN RESOURCE PROGRAMS FOR A "WORKFARE" SOCIETY

DOUGLAS W. REEVES
Recreation Technician
Medford/Park Falls Ranger District
1170 4th Ave. So.
Park Falls, Wisconsin 54552
(715) 762-2461

Clemson Class of 1995

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## *1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

***Title***: Human Resource Programs for a "Workfare" Society

***Author***: Douglas W. Reeves
Recreation Technician
Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest
1170 4th Ave. South
Park Falls, WI 54552
D.Reeves:R09F02A

***AUDIENCE***: Target audience for this paper is federal employees who deal with human resource programs. The paper will also be useful for other governmental agencies and non-profit organizations that deal with federal human resource programs.

***SUMMARY***: On a local and national level, public assistance for those in need is undergoing radical changes. Many "work-for-benefit" laws are being instituted with limits being placed on the amount of time a recipient may receive benefits. Lack of historical context and knowledge of accurate statistics about poverty may adversely affect the human resource program manager's implementation of a community service program.

The private sector does not have the resources to place and train the numbers of people who are in need of community service positions and/or work experience. The Forest Service, due to shrinking budgets and increased use on public lands, has a large backlog of important projects and a shortage of personnel.

State and Federal agencies share the goals of rural community development and the positive interaction of people in their environment. Well-organized community service programs offer the potential for significant improvement in the participant's standard of living, an improvement in the community's economy through lower public assistance levels, and increased community involvement in the management of public lands.

Community service "workfare" programs require thoughtful management. The commitment of co-workers and management to the success of the program is essential. These programs are cost-effective and beneficial to all the parties involved, but they are not free. Proper management minimizes both expenses of time and money.

***OBJECTIVES***: Illustrate the connections between Forest Plans, rural development and involvement in community service programs.

Provide readers with an overview of the history of social welfare in America to facilitate their analysis of current welfare reform issues.

Provide readers with an overview of current welfare reform proposals, issues, and statistics at the national level.

Provide readers with an overview of current welfare reform proposals in the State of Wisconsin.

Provide readers with a thorough understanding of cooperative agreements and the management of community service programs.

Provide readers with the necessary managerial guidelines and philosophy for the operation of community service programs.

Provide readers with a sense of possible future directions of social welfare in America.

***KEYWORDS***: Human Resource Programs, Community Service, Workfare, Rural Development

## PREFACE

Human Resource Programs (HRP) have often been called the "Heart of the Forest Service". I have worked on numerous Forests and Districts, in a variety of resources during my career, and the positions that have had an active HRP component have always been the most personally rewarding. Jack Ward Thomas stated in a recent letter, "**...The Forest Service is actively committed to forming cooperative relationships with individuals and organizations.**" My project, "Human Resource Programs for a Workfare Society," is a small part of the Forest Service's overall commitment to human resource programs.

The method of my research for this project was to gather information on the subject headings: (1) Welfare Reform, (2) Management of Human Resource Programs, (3) Poverty, (4) Community, (5) Social Welfare, (6) Workfare. I used numerous periodicals, books, newspapers, and interviewed different social workers. There was no shortage of information on these subjects. Legitimate, scholarly writings are plentiful...heartfelt opinions are even more numerous!

The realization of the vast quantity of information and contradictory opinions broadened my initial focus on the development and management of "workfare" programs. In order to "make sense" out of the data, it became evident that a historical context on social welfare and the best currently available statistics were needed for the following reasons:

- The research topics deal with core human values, i.e. role of community, duty to the poor, social justice, and individual responsibility. Historical context and accurate statistics helps a manager understand and discuss these sensitive issues.
- History is cyclic - major historical trends often repeat. Historical context and accurate statistics helps a manager to spot these trends.

- Historical context and accurate statistics provides a context for evaluating current events, future directions, and identifying potential partnerships.

- Historical context and accurate statistics helps the HR manager to deal with diverse opinions of others and helps the manager to develop a deeper understanding of the issues.

- Social welfare programs are a highly political and contentious area of our society. Historical context and accurate statistics provides a "rudder" to help keep a program oriented to its positive goals.

*ANALOGY*: If you were going to manage a special emphasis program for Native Americans or African Americans, you would need a historical perspective and accurate statistics to be a good manager. Programs for people who are in distress and living in poverty are no different.

The format I used in my research explained the Forest Service's role and commitment to HR programs, explored the history of social welfare programs, and presented the most accurate statistics available. Next I provided an overview of recent national and State of Wisconsin trends. (Wisconsin is considered by many to be a leader in the area of welfare reform.) Then I laid out the guidelines for writing cooperative agreements and suggestions for managing a community service program. The actual agreement between Price County Health and Human Services and the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest is included in the paper.

The Medford/Park Falls Community Service Crew started work in June 1996, and has been cost effective and productive. The project is a success because:

- Forest Service interaction with the community has increased.
- People in the community are being helped.
- Necessary work on public lands is being performed.
- Other state, local, and federal agencies are becoming involved in new partnerships.
- The crew concept is being used as a model for other agencies.

It is important to understand that this project is just the first phase of implementation of a larger process, and the concept of community service crews is still evolving. The student intern from University of Stevens Point will document what we learn from experience this summer. This paper, along with additional program guidelines, will be available at a later date.

As previously mentioned, other groups are interested in joining into partnerships for the operation of community service programs. The University of Wisconsin would like to expand their role, as would the city of Park Falls, and I'm sure there will be others. These future partnerships will help to add educational components, broaden financial support for the program, and help the Forest Service with our diversity goals in recruitment. (Minorities and women are over-represented in these type of programs.)

In the future, I hope this community service concept will grow into several programs under a larger **"umbrella"** of programs that are centered on:

- helping people to reach their full potential
- self-reliance
- individual responsibility
- education
- social responsibility
- work as a positive life force

This community service crew will be **step #1** with the goals of improving self-esteem, basic workskills, exposure to possible avenues out of poverty, and strategies for dealing with negative or abusive relationships. The emphasis at the first level will be on **"laying the foundation"** for a better future.

**Step #2** will be internship type programs where people start gaining general skills, develop abilities, focus on career paths, increase independence, and have less reliance on government support. Typically, these will be individual placements at worksites. Using the building analogy, level #2 programs will be where you work on **"building the walls"** for a better future.

**Step #3** will be apprenticeship type programs for developing specific professional/technical skills, a high level of personal independence, and little reliance on government support. Again, using the building analogy, this is where you work on **"building the roof"** for a better future.

The context of my Clemson project is the development of a program at the Step #1 level. It is important to view this paper as laying the foundation for the development of community service programs. Much of the paper is a broad overview of the subject of social welfare programs and is meant to be a program primer. The organization of your local human resource program will need to be adapted to your local opportunities. Also, the experience of managing a community service crew will teach many lessons that will be documented at the end of summer in the crew supervisor's paper. This will provide more of the "nuts and bolts" of program management.

The whole area of "workfare" and social welfare is changing rapidly. Laws are being enacted with some unknown consequences, both good and bad. Learn to recognize the paradoxes that are inherent in the welfare reform debate and look for the numerous opportunities that will present themselves to you. If you pursue these opportunities, you will be personally rewarded with the satisfaction of helping others, accomplishing needed projects, and improving your community.

Please call or write to share with me your questions, comments, concerns, and solutions to the challenge of managing community service crews.

Doug Reeves

## CHAPTER 1 - FOREST SERVICE ROLE

**"So I saw that there is nothing better than for a person to be happy in their work, for that is what they are here for, and no one can bring them back to life to enjoy what will be in the future, so let them enjoy it now." Ecclesiastes - Solomon**

The goal of this Clemson project is to produce a guide for Human Resource Program (HRP) managers who are dealing with community "workfare" programs. Since the National Forest System was first established, Human Resource Programs (HRP) have, in various ways, assisted in the management of these lands. A number of programs have been developed along-the-way to channel this valuable human resource. Two examples of these programs are the Civilian Conservation Corps established in the 1930's and the Youth Conservation Corps established during the 1970's. With the Forest Service's shrinking budgets and increased use of our natural resources, the future promises an even greater proliferation of human resource programs.

The Land Management Plan for the Chequamegon National Forests (now being revised as Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest) states:

**"Identify opportunities to help individuals and local communities enhance their self-sufficiency and social well-being."**

**"Identify opportunities in which individuals and volunteer organizations can assist in the management of the National Forest."**

The objectives and policies of HRP programs are detailed in the Forest Service Manual (FSM) 1800:

**"To provide human and natural resource benefits through administering and hosting programs in work, training, and education for the unemployed, the underemployed, the elderly, the young and others with special needs."**

**"Human Resource Programs shall be used, to the extent practicable, to carry out Forest Service work projects for which other funds are not available."**

Under rural development in the FSM 3600, the objectives of rural development are:

> **"...to utilize Forest Service programs and authorities to provide more jobs and income opportunities, to improve rural living conditions, to enrich the cultural life of rural America, and to maintain and protect the environment and natural resources of rural areas."**

Robinson and Christenson, who published a review of literature and a sampling of standard definitions of community development, uses the following definition:

> **"Community development happens when a group in a locality initiates a planned process to change the economic, social, cultural or environmental situation."** (Robinson & Christenson, P. 1-3)

Clearly, involvement in community service programs meets all of the mentioned criteria: (1) there is an opportunity for governmental agencies to be involved with their communities; (2) there are many worthwhile jobs to perform in the public sector; (3) the programs provide natural resource and human benefits; (4) the programs serve the unemployed and underemployed; (5) the programs serve people with special needs; (6) well-organized work-training programs have the potential to improve the quality of life in our communities.

HRP's provide the agency with an opportunity to develop partnerships with the community for the purpose of improving and protecting public lands, and an opportunity to develop better relationships with the community. Also, community "workfare" programs are emerging as an essential component of the welfare reform debate that is sweeping our country. This renewed emphasis on community service in return for benefits, or "workfare", provides an opportunity for the Forest Service to be involved with our local communities in a manner that is consistent with many of our guiding principles.

The current direction of welfare reform in America indicates an opportunity for positive interaction with needy individuals and our local communities. It is an opportunity that should not be wasted. As Solomon reflected long ago, finding joy in one's work is one of the great joys in life, and one of the noblest forms of work is helping other people. Helping people to acquire productive employment is personally gratifying for the participants and the HRP manager, and helps to fulfill our mission of:

**"Caring for the land and serving people."**

## CHAPTER 2 - HISTORY OF WELFARE

The basic tenets and programs of any social welfare system reflect the values of the society in which they function and, like all other social institutions, they do not arise in a vacuum; they stem from the customs, statutes, and practices of the past. Therefore, one cannot understand efforts to help the needy without first comprehending the foundations on which they were built. (Trattner, P.1) To understand the context of the current welfare debate, it is necessary to understand the origins of "welfare" and "workfare".

Welfare is the material and spiritual well-being of people. In this sense, almost every human act is for welfare -- for the welfare of self, of family, or fellow citizens, or even of all humankind. To narrow the subject, we often speak of certain kinds of welfare. Examples: selfishness is welfare of the self; social welfare is for the good of those who need society's special attention; general welfare is for the equal benefit of all people. (Grazia & Gurr, P. 1-8)

All welfare begins with an individual and ends with an individual. The whole welfare process can be contained in a single question: Who gives what to whom, by what means and with what effects? In less modern cultures, this question is fairly simple, i.e. food and shelter is given directly to widows, orphans, the disabled, and the elderly. In present day America, with existence of so many institutions, tax codes and laws which bestow monetary benefits, it is not clear, to the average citizen, who is precisely getting what benefit from which resource.

A welfare activity may benefit either those who are economically well-to-do or those who are economically impoverished, or both. The establishment and operation of a national banking system is just as much a welfare activity as the distribution of old-age assistance funds. The protection of ***natural resources*** presumably benefits all persons about equally, and thus is "general welfare". Finally, as far as welfare activities are concerned, any institution or person may simultaneously be giver and receiver. (Ibid)

Welfare systems are as old as society itself; in every society there has been some system of social welfare. In each case, systems of social welfare have depended upon the economic, political, and religious structure of the society. In the ancient Mesopotamian city-states, for example, a theocratic and partly collectivist economy emphasized work as a universal obligation and provided social security as a right of citizens. A 4,000 year-old Sumerian hymn describes the good goddess Nanshe: (Ibid)

**Who knows the orphan, who knows the widow,**
**knows the oppression of man over man, is the orphan's mother,**
**Nanshe, who cares for the widow,**
**who seeks out justice for the poorest.**
**The queen brings the refugee to her lap,**
**finds shelter for the weak.**

The ancient Greeks frequently discussed the matter of welfare for those in need. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) spoke of man as a social animal who had to cooperate with and assist his fellow men. He, among others, said it was more blessed to give than to receive. Even more important for the history of American social welfare, however, are the ancient Jewish doctrines which teach the ***duty*** of giving and, equally important, the ***right*** of those in need to receive. (Trattner, P.2) In the Bible, in the Book of Jeremiah, the prophet admonishes the wicked rich saying, **"Now they are great and rich, and well fed and well groomed, and there is no limit to their wicked deeds. They refuse justice to orphans and the rights of the poor...the Lord God asks. Shouldn't I punish a nation such as this?"**

Christianity, the dominant religion in the American culture, continued the Old Testament traditions with emphasis upon good deeds, charity, love of one's enemies, and entry into heaven by God's mercy. Since all the founders of Christianity were Jewish, this is not surprising. One of the best examples of these teachings is found in Matthew teaching on charity and the Day of Judgement where it states, **"When you refused to help the least of these my brothers, you were refusing to help me."**

Doing one's social duties well and doing well for others were common themes in East and West over the centuries. The medieval Church became the chief instrument for spreading St. Paul's Christian doctrine of charity. From St. Thomas to the humblest peasant, Western man could clearly state his obligations to give alms. An English lyric of twelfth or thirteenth century carried the message forceably: (Grazia & Gurr, 1-8)

**Every freeman should be kind**
**and give what Christ has let him find.**
**For life must end in death alone,**
**whence he has no land but his length of bone.**

Faced with such crises as the Black Death, famine, and high unemployment, charity was a definite trait of medieval society. Poverty tended to be viewed as an "Act-of-God" or a misfortune that could happen to anyone. Around 1300 A.D., the idea of individual responsibility for poverty gained in popularity with the belief that begging by the able-bodied was a crime with punishment of

public flogging, branding, imprisonment, and death. By the 1500's, money was often set aside by townships in England for the employment of the abled-bodied that were in need. This would be the medieval equivalent of modern "workfare" programs.

England's "Poor Laws", which were medieval society's response to poverty and social upheaval, were unique in establishing assistance as a specialized secular function where formerly it had been a church function. Similarly, in the United States, many once-prominent non-governmental institutions now perform secondary welfare roles, whereas government activity has assumed a primary role. The change has come about slowly and has roots in early American tradition.

Personal responsibility is not a new concept in American history. At Jamestown, **John Smith** had to rely upon an order, backed by police power, to secure general cooperation with measures deemed essential to group and individual preservation. He argued his case in the following manner, **"The sick shall not starve, but equally share of all our labors; and he that gathereth not every day as much as I do, the next day shall be set beyond the river, and be banished from the Fort as a drone, till he amend his conditions or strave...he who would not work must not eat."** (Pumphrey & Pumphrey, P. 11-15)

The flip side of this puritan work ethnic is contained in a sermon preached by John Wintrop, the first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1630, **"We must delight in each other, make others conditions our own, rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our community as member of the same body."** (Winthrop, P.92)

English emphasis on personal responsibility was reinforced by the American independence movement and a land of bountiful resources. Poverty was no longer viewed as an act-of-God and the able-bodied, even during economic depressions, were viewed as having the resources to overcome their poverty. Why would someone be poor in "the land of opportunity"? Thus, it was assumed, the only excuse for poverty was individual weakness. As Nathanial Ware, a social philosopher of the early nineteenth century saw it, the able-bodied man who begged or received public assistance was beyond redemption, having sunk to the level of a mere eating brute. **"Humanity aside," reported Ware, "it would be to the best interest of society to kill all such drones."** (Tratter, P. 50)

Around 1800, Poor Laws came under attack for interfering with the "natural right" to the accumulation of wealth and property. Poor Laws were viewed as an artificial creation of the state which taxed the well-to-do for the care of the needy, and this was viewed as violating this natural right and was therefore morally wrong.

Denying the organic concept of society in favor of "natural law" and a belief in harmony of the universe, the dominant philosophy of the nineteenth century was individualism and laissez-faire. Human happiness, or rather the greatest happiness for the greatest number, was the purpose of life and the goal of society. Society, it was believed, was composed of isolated individuals, each of whom was the best judge of his own interests. The sum of each individual's good led to the good of the whole. As a result, any interference with the individual was a blow, or impediment, to the social good or welfare. Since wealth was a primary source of happiness, unfettered self-interest and the accumulation of wealth (and property) was the ideal. (Trattner, P. 46)

As the United States underwent the industrial revolution, the country changed radically: factories replaced family shops and cities developed to service the workers of growing business firms. In 1800, little over 6 percent of the population lived in cities, by 1870 approximately 25 percent of the population resided in cities. In the field of welfare, industrialization made two major contributions. It made greater resources available to relieve society's problems and raised the standard of living. Also, it made it harder for the poor to survive without outside attention. Health conditions were an early concern as the gap between rich and poor widened. (Pumphrey & Pumphrey, P. 11-15)

The public health movement gained strength by the middle of the nineteenth century. Cities were described as filthy, disorderly, foul-smelling, disease ridden places. Rickety tenements, swarming with unwashed humanity, leaned upon one another for support. Inadequate drainage systems failed to carry away sewage. Pigs roamed streets that were cluttered with manure, years of accumulated garbage, and other litter. Outside privies bordered almost every thoroughfare. Slaugtherhouses and fertilizing plants contaminated the air with an indescribable stench. Ancient plagues like smallpox, cholera, and typhus threw the population into a state of terror from time-to-time while less sensational but equally deadly killers like tuberculosis, diphtheria, and scarlet fever were ceaselessly at work. (Trattner, P. 116)

Also developing during this time was the understanding by the majority of Americans that children were the future of the nation, and many programs were instituted to improve the care and health of the children. Slowly, the philosophy of individual responsibility was adjusting to the fact that social and economic forces could be more pressing than individual forces. The magnitude of the problems reinforced the need for collective action through the government to find solutions.

On April 9, 1912, legislation was signed establishing the U.S. Children's Bureau (replaced in 1953 by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare). This legislation was enacted because many of the abuses against children were going unchecked such as poorly run orphanages, child labor abuses, and malnutrition. At the turn of the century, the U.S. spent more on the study of animal husbandry than on children which resulted in young animals having lower death rates than young children. The legislation was opposed because business feared the loss of cheap labor and the bureau was accused of being a communist/socialist plot to control youth. The Bureau was very significant because it became the sole source of statistics on families, and it was the first time the federal government recognized the rights of children.

Another impetus for improved social welfare programs was the draft for World War I. Thousands of men were rejected for medical reasons that were due to preventable childhood diseases. Similarly, the draft for World War II pointed out the need for mental health services, due to the rejection of many draftees for mental health reasons, and the inability to deal with many of the mental health problems soldiers suffered returning from previous wars.

On November 19, 1921, the Infant and Maternity Act (or Sheppard-Tower Act) established many rural health centers and greatly lowered maternal and infancy mortality rates. This was a significant act historically because it marked the first time that block grants were given to the state for reasons other than education, and laid the foundation for many later Social Security Programs. Again, the legislation was bitterly opposed as state interference in family life, communist/socialist plots, and big government.

The next social problem that was addressed was the inability of single mothers to support families. Missouri enacted the first widowers pension law to provide cash assistance to mothers with dependent children. The need for this law was highlighted by the number of children that were being turned over to orphanages because mothers were physically collapsing while trying to save their families in exhausting, low wage jobs. By 1939, all but South Carolina and Georgia had enacted similar laws.

Over the last 400 years, a common philosophical theme behind welfare reform debates has been individual responsibility for poverty versus social/economic pressures being responsible for poverty. The Great Depression of the 1930's shifted weight to the social/economic side of the argument as large numbers of previously employed citizens overwhelmed the social structure of America. Only the federal government could deal with problems of this scale.

By the end of the 1930's, social work was not only an acknowledged obligation of the federal government, but also of every city, village, and hamlet in the nation, and its scope had greatly expanded. It no longer meant merely providing financial relief to the destitute and casework to the emotionally disturbed. Social workers were now involved in social insurance schemes, park and recreation programs, agricultural resettlement projects, slum clearance and relocation plans, and numerous other similar activities; in fact, all efforts to make America a better and more secure place in which to live. Social work, in other words, was no longer viewed as an emergency profession, but as an accepted part of the machinery of the state, an important everyday function in a modern urban industrial society. (Tratter, P.245)

Historically, much of the debate over welfare has failed to address the question: "How do we provide gainful employment for all?" Positive public works programs are one part of the equation along with minimum social support programs e.g., minimum wage laws, health care, day care, social security. Individual responsibility cannot offer the sole solutions to society's problems. That is the lesson that American history has repeatedly taught during the last 200 years in America, and our society is still trying to find the correct answer to this lesson.

There is also a morality of charity that is at the heart of all America's culture and all ancient religions. Fortunately for America, each generation has had members who have reminded us that in a land of affluence, poverty is shameful. It is harmful for those who are suffering from it, and it is shameful for the society that allows it to exist.

The process of establishing governmental welfare programs is identified by six vaguely defined phases:

(1) **A need is discovered. This is usually done by a non-governmental agency established for some other purpose.**

(2) **Public concern is aroused, as the need is advertised as urgent. A "crisis psychology" is generated as the need becomes generally recognized.**

(3) **Experimental programs are undertaken to demonstrate or test appropriate means of remedy. Such projects may be undertaken by the non-governmental agency originally involved, by a separate agency formed for the function, or by some local governmental unit.**

(4) **National concern is aroused to climax the "crisis." A White House Conference may be called to study the need, or, more often, a special national commission, a Congressional hearing, or an independent national conference does such a study.**

(5) **The national government becomes intimately involved, either as a center of information or as a source of funds administered through grants-in-aid and State-sharing programs. A special federal agency is created and "pilot projects" are undertaken.**

(6) **The function is accepted as a permanent federal activity and State and local programs are expanded. Non-governmental agencies may be gradually displaced, may be converted to largely tax-supported operation, or may continue to operate both to experiment with new methods and to supplement governmental activities.**

These steps, that were developed by Grazia & Gurr in 1960, can also be identified in today's budget/welfare "crisis" situation. A crisis has been identified as the "failure of welfare" and the growing deficit. A crisis psychology is being generated by the talk of "ending welfare as we know it," a need for more individual responsibility, a need to return money to those who make it", and "Republican Revolution". Experimental programs, such as in Wisconsin (see Chapter 5), are being developed. The crisis is climaxing at the national level, and the end result will be a new national policy.

The following concepts have recurred frequently through the decades and are fundamental to modern social welfare and the American culture: (Grazia & Gurr, P. 1-8)

(1) **Each person has a primary obligation to do all that they can to provide for and care for himself** (herself) **and his** (her) **family.**

(2) **Each person has a further obligation to govern their own behavior by consideration of the present and future needs of the entire social group. This embraces provision and care for incapacitated persons, including dependent children, because of their membership in the group, their past contribution, and potential future contributions.**

(3) **Beyond personal obligation, governmental authority supports a group obligation to preserve the lives of all its members. Hence, those who obstruct the group or who fail to carry out their personal obligations should be punished, or compelled to change their behavior.**

(4) **The sense of obligation may extend beyond the "in-group" to include all accessible people in trouble, whether they be kin, neighbors, or strangers.**

*Summary and Conclusions:* It is important to understand the cultural, historical, and philosophical roots of America's welfare system because they frame our current debate on welfare reform and shape the structure of the programs that a human resource program manager will oversee. The opposing forces of individual responsibility and society's communal responsibilities will always be evident. There will be those who will argue that people should be pulled out of poverty and those who will argue that they should climb. There will also be those who will generalize and stereotype welfare recipients from both sides of the issues. I encourage you to focus on each individual as a unique case with varied strengths and weaknesses. Do not let statistics and rhetoric cloud your communications with unique individuals.

## CHAPTER 3 - WELFARE STATISTICS

Someone once observed that, **"Facts are facts, but perception is reality."** It is difficult to discuss reality in our society when our perceptions vary so widely. Poverty has dropped from the list of things Americans can discuss in public with civility and a sense of shared purpose. It is increasingly clear that the topic cannot be broached today without causing a noisy, bitter, and usually unproductive debate. Following are samples of the divisive rhetoric that stereotypes welfare recepients: (Corn, 1995, P. 514)

> **Representative John Mica compared welfare recipients to alligators who lose their survival instincts if they receive "unnatural feeding" from do-good humans.**

> **Representative Barbara Cubin equated welfare recipients to the wolves being reintroduced into the West. The animals will not leave the pens where they are fed and pampered by federal bureaucrats.**

There are more examples in the news recently where particularly grisly murders will inspire some politicians to cite welfare as the root source of the problem. To avoid stereotyping, gross generalizations, and prejudice, we need to develop a common understanding on some basic questions: Who are the poor? Why are they poor? How much assistance do they receive? How can they be lifted out of poverty? What is poverty?

*Profiles of the Poor*

**The figures used to define poverty is calculated by a ratio of an economy meal plan, as defined by the Department of Agriculture, times three to define a "poverty" income. This formula was developed in 1965 by a noted economist Mollie Orshanksy who deplores the fact that it is still being used. For one thing, people today spend about 15 percent of their income on food, not 25 to 33 percent. Public opinion polls about what is a necessary income to stay above "poverty" level frequently places the poverty level well above the official figure.** (Lavelle, P. 14-15)

**In 1965, approximately 33.2 million persons lived in households below the official poverty level, representing 17 percent of the U.S. population. By 1973, both the absolute number of persons living in poverty (23 million), and the rate of poverty (11 percent) had declined significantly. By 1988, however, the number of persons in poverty was back up to 31.9 million, 13.1 percent of the population.** (Lavelle, 1995, xxv)

**The percentage of poor immigrant families rose from 11 percent in 1980 to 31.7 percent in 1990.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 198)

**Only 9 percent of below-poverty adults work full-time, and 40 percent work part-time. This compares to 42 percent of above-poverty level adults working full-time and 69 percent working part-time.** (Topolnicki, 1995, P. 122)

**Some 46 percent of families with children headed by single mothers live below the poverty line, compared with only 8 percent of families with two parents . Less than half own a home, while slightly more than half own at least one car. The estimated median net worth of property owned by the poor amount to a paltry $3,900.** (Shapiro, 1995, p. 38)

**Surprisingly, only about half of the families that fall under the poverty level collect welfare benefits. About half of the poor receive food stamps and collect such traditional benefits as AFDC or SSI, 47 percent receive Medicaid assistance, and a meager 18 percent receive some form of public or government-subsidized housing.** (Topolinicki, 1995, P. 122)

**The average family of three will collect only about $414 per month, but the family is also entitled to food stamps and Medicaid.** (Ibid)

**Studies show that while about a third of the poor are elderly or disabled and thus unlikely to climb out of poverty, one of every five poor people in a given year is not poor the following year...roughly a third of the nation's poor remain impoverished only temporarily owing to job loss, illness or divorce.** (Topolnicki, 1995, P. 122)

**It is a myth that people living in poverty spend more on alcohol than do the nonpoor. In fact, out of every dollar spent on food or alcohol in 1992, alcohol accounted for approximately five cents of the dollar for the poorest one-fifth of U.S. households, seven cents for the middle, and eight cents for the wealthiest.** (Lavelle, 1995, P.31)

**Last year, American households with incomes of less than $10,000 gave an average of 5.5 percent of their earnings to charity or to a religious organization; those making more than $100,000 a year gave only 2.9 percent.** (Lavelle, 1995, xix)

*Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)*

AFDC benefits are tailored to the cost-of-living in each state. States, however, share in some of the cost of providing AFDC benefits. As a result, only about a dozen states set AFDC benefits at the proper level of providing a family with enough financial resources to make ends meet. Monthly AFDC benefits for a family of three range from a high of $950 per month in Alaska, providing 100 percent of the cost of living, to a low of $164 in Alabama, providing 24 percent of the cost of living. Among all states, AFDC benefits provide an average of 63 percent of the cost to support a family. This percentage marks a sharp drop since 1979, when AFDC benefits provided a national average of 92 percent of a family's cost of living. (Topolnicki, 1995, P. 122)

It is a myth that a large percentage of welfare mothers are teenagers and that teenagers are having more babies than ever. Only 1% of AFDC benefits are paid out to mothers under the age of 18. Under the present system, the teenage pregnancy rate rose by 23% between 1972 and 1990, but the birth rate actually fell by 2%, largely because of a doubling of the abortion rate among teenagers. (Topolnicki, 1995, P. 126)

About five million families are now on AFDC: 86 percent of AFDC children are in families headed by a single parent who is divorced, separated, or never married. (Congressional Digest, June-July 1995, P.162)

Most of the poor do not have large families. The average poor family receiving AFDC assistance consists of 2.9 people, compared to the average American family of 3.2 people. (Topolnicki, 1995, P.122)

According to the House Ways and Means Committee, AFDC programs have had an average growth rate of 1.1% from 1975 to 1993. (Topolnicki, 1995, P.122)

As of 1993, one in seven American children was on AFDC. (Lavelle, 1995, P.90)

After closely monitoring 4,428 mothers--2,999 who were penalized if they had more children while on welfare and a control group of 1,429 who were not--the Rutgers team says there is "no reduction in the birthrate of welfare mothers attributable" to the family cap. (Kramer, 1995, P.21)

The inflation-adjusted value of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) plus food stamps declined by 26 percent between 1972 and 1992. (Lavelle, 1995, P.21)

*Teenage Mothers*

Girls under the age of 18 are the victims of about half of the nation's rapes each year according to Justice Department data. When researchers Debra Boyer and David Fine surveyed poor and pregnant teens at Washington State's public health clinics, they were startled to find that two thirds of these girls reported prior sexual abuse, almost always by parents, guardians or relatives. Even more shocking, on average, the girls were less than 10 years old at the time of the first abuse while the offending male was 27. (Shapiro, 1995, P.52)

One Baltimore study found that 32 percent of the adult male partners of teenage girls were neither working nor in school at the time of a child's birth. (Shapiro, 1995, P.52)

**Thirty-nine percent of 15-year-old mothers say the fathers of their babies are 20 years old or older. In 1920, 93 percent of babies born to teenagers were fathered by adults. What has changed is that more often than not, pregnant teens no longer marry the father. Today, 65 percent of teenage moms are unmarried, up from 48 percent in 1980.** (Shapiro, 1995, P.51)

**Over 1,400 teenage girls (two-thirds of them unmarried) become mothers every day. Only 60 percent of them will earn high school diplomas.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 173)

*Children*

**According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 21.9% of children live in poverty.** (Topolnicki, 1995, P.122)

**More American children lived in poverty in 1992 than in any year since 1965, although our Gross National Product grew 53.2 percent during the same period.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 27)

**Nearly one child in eight (12.9 percent) is being raised on government welfare through Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 28)

**In 1990, one-third of the homeless were families with children.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 82)

**Every 30 seconds a child is born into poverty.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 32)

**Anemia and other dietary deficiencies are common amoung poor children and adults. Iron deficiency anemia is twice as common in low-income children between the ages of one and two than in the general population.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 34)

**One in five American children - 14.6 million - is poor.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 35)

**In 1991, an estimated 12 million children under the age of 18 (18.3 percent of all children) were hungry. Between 1989 and 1992 the number of children receiving food stamps increased by 41 percent, to 13.3 million.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 36)

**American children are twice as likely to be poor as Canadian children, 3 times as likely to be poor as British children, 4 times as likely to be poor as French children, and 7 to 13 times more likely to be poor than German, Dutch, and Swedish children.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 38)

**In 1990, 15 states had child poverty rates of 20 percent and above. In Mississippi and Louisiana, one in every three children were poor, while New Mexico, West Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Arkansas, the rate was one in four.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 42)

According to a 1989 report in the Boston Globe, as many as four million migrants work in American fields and an additional one to one-and-a-half million children accompany them. The high school dropout rate for migrant children is over 90 percent in both Texas and California. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 45)

A migrant farm worker child can be employed in agriculture even if younger than 10 years old. No other child of that age can be legally be employed. These children can work more than 40 hours a week, even during the school term, but he or she is not eligible to receive overtime pay. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 46,48)

Every day over 500 children ages 10 to 14 begin using illegal drugs, and over 1,000 start drinking alcohol. Nearly half of all middle-schoolers abuse drugs or alcohol. Every five seconds a student drops out of public school. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 55, 60)

Between 1984 and 1987, the United States had the lowest success rate in lifting children out of poverty among a sample of industrialized nations, with a rate nine times smaller than countries like the United Kingdom and France. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 61)

As of 1990, children under the age of 18 accounted for 40 percent of the poor and only 24 percent of the nonpoor. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 67)

Less than 4 percent of children in the bottom-quarter families finish college, compared to 76 percent in the top quarter. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 69)

Children now make up an estimated 30 percent of all homeless persons seeking shelter. One in five poor children had no health insurance at all during 1992. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 145)

Low-income children are: two times more likely to die from birth defects, three times more likely to die from all causes combined, four times more likely to die in fires, five times more likely to die from infectious diseases and parasites, and six times more likely to die from other diseases than are nonpoor children. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 120)

*Race*

Most of the poor do not live in inner city ghettos, but live in as varied rural, suburban and urban environments as the rest of America. Most of the poor are not minorities. Whites make up 67 percent of America's poor, while blacks comprise 29 percent of America's poor, a percentage of racial composition that has barely changed since the mid-1960's. (Topolnicki, 1995, P.122)

One in four black high school graduates and almost one in eight white graduates are not likely to earn more than a poverty-level income. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 11)

Whites make up only 17 percent of the urban poor but 55 percent of the rural poor. Among blacks, the proportion is 49 percent of the urban poor and 32 percent of the rural poor, whereas Hispanics make up 29 percent of the urban poor but only 8 percent of the rural poor. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 12)

In 1990, 31.9 percent of all blacks lived below the official poverty level, compared to 28.1 percent of Latinos, and 8.8 percent of the white population. (Lavelle, 1995, xxv)

As of 1989, almost one-fifth of all poor households were living in deficient housing (with moderate to severe physical or structural problems. The situation was especially critical for poor black families, 29 percent of whom lived in such housing. As many as 26 percent of all poor Hispanic households lived in overcrowded housing. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 119)

About 1 in 4 poor people lives in the South. More than 4 in 10 African-Americans were below the poverty level Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Wisconsin. The poverty rate amount African-Americans was below 10 percent in only one state - Hawaii. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 177)

There are over 1.9 million Native Americans in the United States today; 31 percent of them live at or below the poverty line. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 127)

Of the 10 poorest United States counties in the last census, 4 were Indian lands in South Dakota. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 129)

On some reservations, unemployment exceeds 80 percent. On the Navaho lands, unemployment ranges from 30 percent to 40 percent (four to five times the national average), and shacks are more common than houses.
(Lavelle, 1995, P. 130)

Most poor Hispanic families (64 percent) are families in which one or more individuals do work part or all of the year. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 156)

Child poverty rates reach 45 percent for blacks, 38 percent for Hispanics, and 16 percent for whites. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 171)

*Working Poor*

For many, work is no longer a guaranteed way out of poverty. In fact, people on welfare who do find jobs usually earn too little to support a family. Rebecca M. Blank, co-director of Northwestern University's Urban Poverty Program, notes: "Changes in the wage structure of the economy during the 1980's have made it increasingly difficult to escape poverty through hard work." (Gibbs, 1995, P. 122)

The working poor's position looks more precarious than ever. The Labor Department reported that despite the exuberant stock market and mild inflation, real wages keep on falling. For the lowest earning 10% of workers, the weekly paycheck averaged $225 last year, a 10% drop since the late '70's after inflation is taken into account. It means that more people than ever are working fulltime and still living below the poverty line of $15,141 for a family of four. (Gibbs, 1995, P.18)

The standard recommendation is that a family should budget 30% of its income for housing. Among the working poor, 70% is more typical. "It doesn't take much in the way of an unforeseen circumstances to spin these people out of control," says Anita Beaty, director of Atlanta's Task Force for the Homeless. "You cannot pay rent and child care on minimum wage." (Gibbs, 1995, P.18)

Today more than three-quarters of American households pay more in payroll taxes than in income taxes. The employer and employee share of the payroll tax, which in 1960 was 3% each, for a total of $530 for people who worked full time at minimum wage, now stands at 7.65% each for a total of $1,352. (Ibid)

Nearly one-third of the households making use of emergency food programs have someone working full- or part-time. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 85)

According to a 1994 New York Times poll, almost 40 percent of workers worry that during the next two years they might be laid off, have to work reduced hours, or take a cut in pay. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 89)

In Atlanta, a quarter of the people who call the homeless hot line are working people: schoolteachers, chefs, computer-maintenance people, and airline flight attendants. (Gibbs, 1995, P.18)

The proportion of Americans with full-time jobs whose incomes were too low to bring a family above the poverty level rose by 50 percent between 1979 and 1992, from 12 percent to 18 percent of all workers. Between 1970 and 1993, there was a 178 percent increase in the number of inoluntary part-time workers, while the number of full-time workers went up by only 51 percent. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 81)

Nearly two-thirds of the rural poor have at least one family member who works. (Lavelle, 1995, P. 104)

*Social Programs Expenditures*

Welfare expenditures are a significant, though certainly not dominant, share of federal government spending. In 1994, about 12 percent of the federal budget was spent on entitlement programs for the poor. This means that a family earning $50,000 annually typically pays about $615 a year for federal programs that support poor people, including the elderly and disabled. (Topolnicki, 1995, P.122)

In terms of proportion of total entitlement payments for assistance to the elderly and the poor, Medicaid comprises the largest share of the budget. With some 31 million recipients of Medicaid, the program costs about $132 billion a year. The food stamp program has nearly 27 million participants at a cost of $25 billion a year. SSI costs nearly as much (24 billion) but has only 6 million recipients. AFDC, with 14 million beneficiaries, costs the federal government $22 billion annually. Low-income housing assistance benefits 6 million poor people at a yearly cost of $20 billion (U.S. Congress, House Committee on Ways and Means, 1995).

**The federal and state spending on AFDC is about $22 billion a year - $128 billion less than the government spent on the bail-out resulting from the Savings and Loans crisis. That means the money lost for the S & L crisis could have paid for AFDC in all 50 states for nearly seven years.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 91)

*Poverty Statistics*

**The poverty rate in 1964, the year President Lyndon Johnson formally promised to end poverty in America, was 19%. It's now 14.5%. The rate of poverty increase since the low of 11.1% in 1973 is due to value of both cash welfare benefits and wages paid to low-skilled workers dropping sharply.** (Topolnicki, 1995, P.122)

**To rise above the poverty threshold set by the federal government of $17,449 for a family of five, a full-time job that pays at least $8.38 an hour is necessary. Minimum wage is currently $4.25 an hour.** (Topolnicki, 1995, P. 122)

**Almost 8 million households live below the poverty level as defined by the federal government. The poverty level for a family of 4 is $14,763.**
(Ibid)

**Eight million households in the United States, or 12 percent of all households, fall under the poverty level. This amounts to 22 percent of all children and 13 percent of all people over 65 living under the poverty level.** (Ibid)

*Education*

**Between 1973 and 1991, real entry-level wages for high school graduates went down by over 25 percent from $8.69 to $6.68.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 86)

**As of 1990, three-fifths of individuals aged 25 to 64 with less than a high school education earned less than $10,000 or did not work at all. In 1991, 16 percent of the U.S. adult population had not attained a high school diploma. As of March of 1993, unemployment rates for workers without a high school diploma were 75 percent higher than those of workers with high school diploma and 250 percent higher than those of workers with a college degree.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 5-7)

**In 1992, 12 percent of all 10th- to 12th-grade drop-outs said they had to care for a family member.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 56)

**Every five seconds a student drops out of public school.** (Lavelle, 1995, P.60)

**Less than 4 percent of children in the bottom-quarter families finish college, compared to 76 percent in the top quarter.** (Lavelle, 1995, P. 69)

*Summary and Conclusions*: What emerges from these statistics and the research that I have done is a picture of poverty that is far different from much of the heated rhetoric. Some of the facts that tend to be lost in the current debate are:

* The **average** adult on welfare is white, middle-aged, and not located in inner-cities. (Some groups are represented at a rate higher than their percentage of the population. Averages are figured from total population.)

* Most people receiving public assistance are in need of temporary help due to illness, divorce, or recent unemployment.

* The largest group of people receiving assistance is women and children.

* The group that suffers the most from poverty is children.

* Racism is a significant **factor** in the perpetuation of poverty for people of color, but not the only factor.

* The benefits (like inexpensive food and clothes) that society receives from cheap labor are a factor in the suppression of wages for certain categories of work.

* Social and economic factors are much more significant than personal morality issues in the general scheme of poverty in America.

* American government does much less to help poor people than other developed, industrial democracies.

* Older men play a large role in the problem of teenage pregnancies and sexual abuse of younger women. The problem is much more complex than teenagers being promiscuous.

* Lack of education and educational opportunities keeps many mired in poverty.

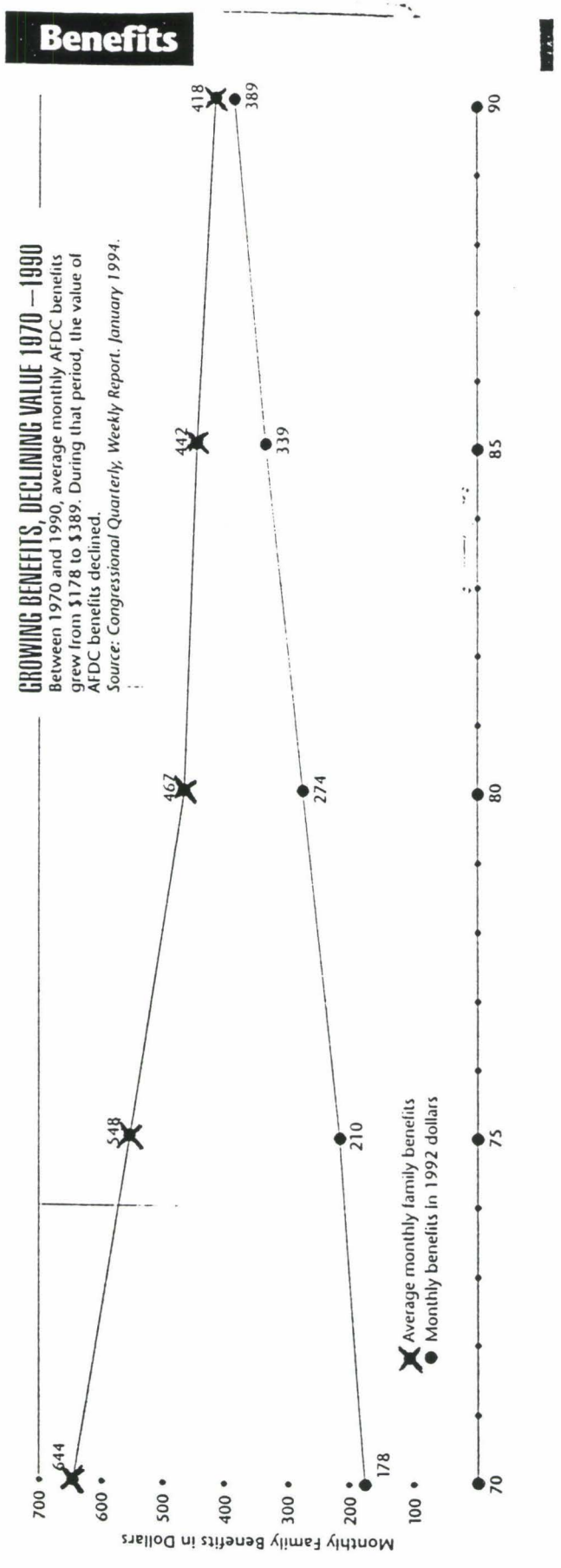
It is true that all the negative examples of poor conduct and abuse exist in the welfare system, but it is important to note that such examples of poor conduct exist at all levels of our society. It is not fair to hold people in poverty to a higher standard than the rest of society.

When administering a community service program, you will find that many of the people you deal with are in need of temporary help, especially in the area of self-esteem. Realize that many of the self-esteem problems are related to abusive homelifes, i.e., non-supportive spouses, abusive spouses, "toxic" parents, lack of positive role models, and lack of firm life goals.

None of the above reasons excuse bad behavior or those who take advantage of the welfare system, but awareness of the problem can provide management insight. Problems should always be dealt with firmly and fairly. "Tough love" is what is needed in many cases. You help no one and harm the program when you ignore problems. If you are receiving too many "bad apples", discuss the screening process from your case managers. Develop a better consensus with your case worker on how the screening process should be performed. HRP managers should not fall into the trap of generalization, stereotyping, and prejudice in the management of their programs.

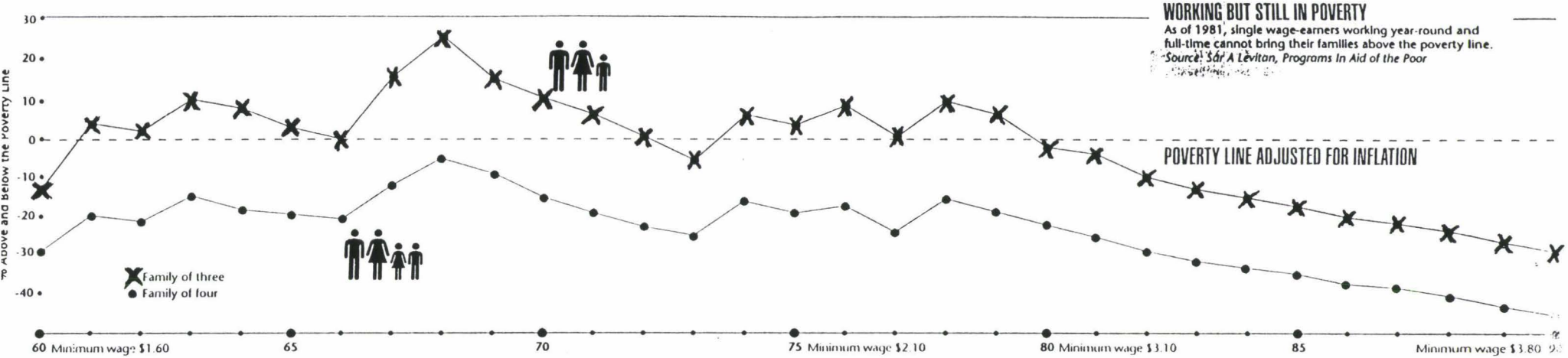
Exhibit A illustrates the ratio of growing benefits to declining values of AFDC from 1970 to 1990. Exhibit B illustrates (1) the relation of the minimum wage to the poverty line for a family, (2) the racial breakdown of poverty, (3) and poverty levels for different age groups.

# (EXHIBIT A)


Benefits
GROWING BENEFITS, DECLINING VALUE 1970—1990
Between 1970 and 1990, average monthly AFDC benefits grew from $178 to $389. During that period, the value of AFDC benefits declined.
Source: Congressional Quarterly, Weekly Report, January 1994.
Monthly Family Benefits in Dollars
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
644
548
467
442
418
389
339
274
210
178
70
75
80
85
90
Average monthly family benefits
Monthly benefits in 1992 dollars

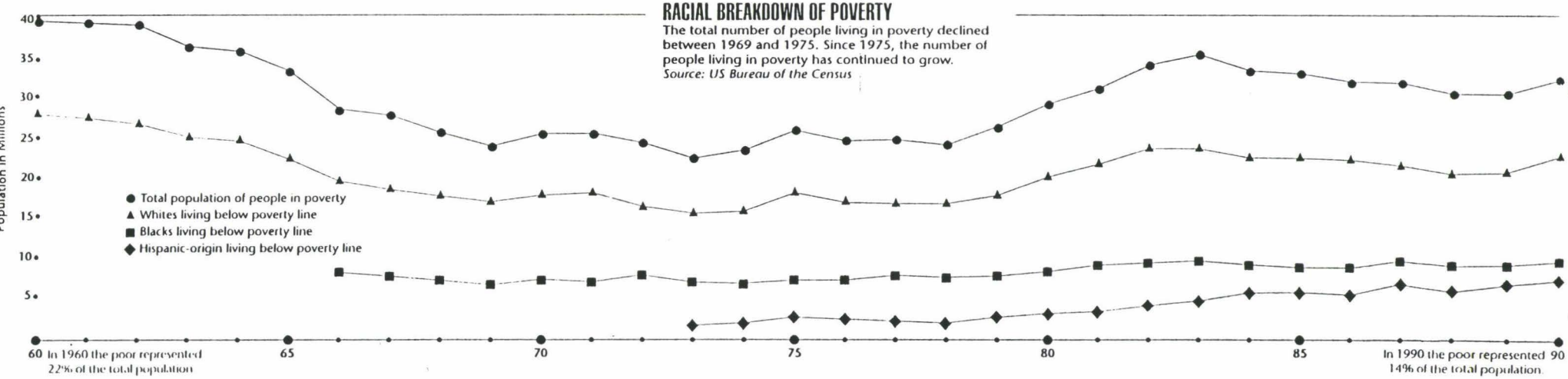
## WORKING BUT STILL IN POVERTY

As of 1981, single wage-earners working year-round and full-time cannot bring their families above the poverty line.
*Source: Sar A Levitan, Programs In Aid of the Poor*



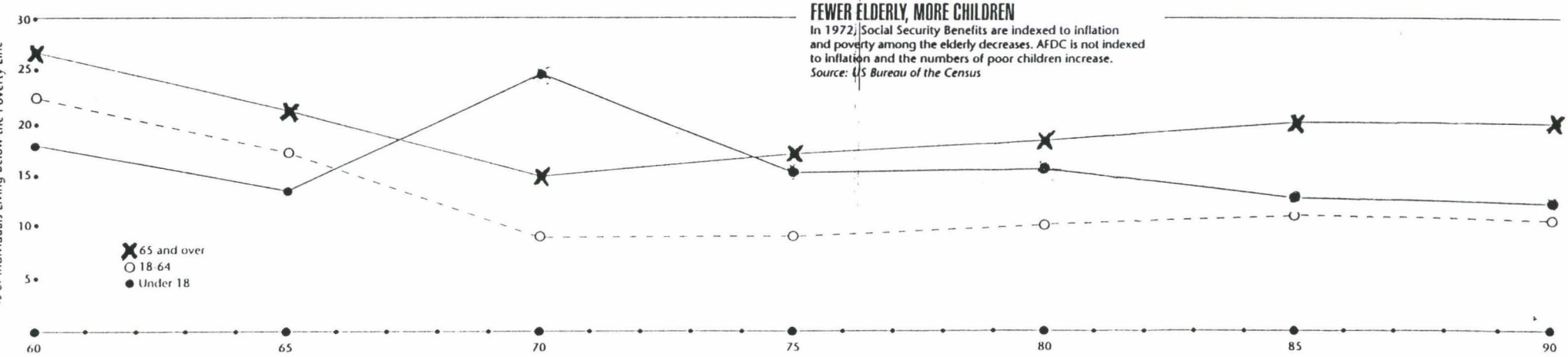

## RACIAL BREAKDOWN OF POVERTY

The total number of people living in poverty declined between 1969 and 1975. Since 1975, the number of people living in poverty has continued to grow.
*Source: US Bureau of the Census*




## FEWER ELDERLY, MORE CHILDREN

In 1972, Social Security Benefits are indexed to inflation and poverty among the elderly decreases. AFDC is not indexed to inflation and the numbers of poor children increase.
*Source: US Bureau of the Census*




(EXHIBIT B)

## CHAPTER 4 - NATIONAL WELFARE REFORM

**"He who decides a case without hearing the other side...Tho he decide justly, cannot be considered just." --Seneca**

To bring the current welfare reform debate into focus, we need to understand the context of the debate in terms of recent history. The Congressional Digest, June/July 1995, provided an excellent summary. The following are the relevant excerpts:

**Government aid to low-income Americans bears little resemblance today to what was originally intended. Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), now the Nation's main welfare program, was established in 1935, as part of the Social Security Act, to provide temporary government assistance to mothers of young children whose fathers had died. Today, most of the welfare population (86 percent) consists of children in families headed by a single parent who is divorced, separated, or never married. In addition, the welfare rolls have grown over the years, along with rising divorce rates, out-of-wedlock births, and expanded eligibility. In 1936, there were half a million AFDC beneficiaries; today, there are approximately 14 million.**

**While about 70 percent of AFDC recipients leave the program within two years, a small core group (about seven percent) remains on welfare for at least eight years, and many former recipients return to the rolls after working for a short period.**

**There are several reasons why AFDC mothers have a hard time finding and keeping jobs. First, welfare guarantees a base level of income support that acts as a work disincentive by competing with employment wages -- especially given the low earning potential of many AFDC mothers. Second, costs associated with going to work, such as child care and transportation, reduce the financial gain from employment. Third, most AFDC recipients lose government subsidized health insurance after taking a job. Finally, even with existing worker training and placement programs, there are not enough available jobs to employ the large number of adults on welfare.**

The current debate has centered on ways to remove these disincentives and promote greater self-sufficiency. The House of Representatives recently approved the Republican Majority's welfare reform bill, the Personal Responsibility Act. This legislation would reshape the current system, while making significant cuts in Federal welfare spending and restricting eligibility for many current recipients. Funding for many existing programs would be consolidated into block grants (lump sum payments)--giving States the flexibility to operate programs and expend funds in accordance with their own needs, as long as they meet certain Federal conditions.

Proponents of the legislation believe that the current system, while well-intentioned, does more harm than good by perpetuating behavior that is destructive to both individuals and society. The problem, they maintain, is too many counterproductive, overlapping, and financially uncontrollable Federal programs. They argue that giving State governments the authority to design and run welfare programs will bring decisions closer to the citizens affected by them.

Those opposed to the legislation believe that it simply cuts programs for the poor without providing any means of moving them from welfare to work. They argue that the bill is especially harsh to children, who have no control over their circumstances. Opponents warn that forcing people off welfare will increase crime, illness, and other problems, costing society more over the long term. The real need, they maintain, is to create stable, entry-level jobs, supported by adequate child care and other services.

President Clinton has threatened to veto the bill as currently written, and it is likely to be significantly changed in the Senate. Thus, it is uncertain whether this Congress will be able to reach a consensus on the highly controversial and complex issue of welfare reform.

The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program originated in the Social Security Act of 1935 to provide Federal grants to States to share in the costs of State-designated programs for cash aid to needy children with absent parents. Initial recipients were mostly widows with minor children, a group whose need was expected to "wither away" after survivor benefits were added to the brand new Social Security system. However, AFDC grew in size and came to serve mostly families headed by divorced, separated, or never-married mothers. At first, States decided which fatherless families deserved aid, and they applied "unsuitable home" guidelines to curb eligibility for unwed mothers. However, a 1961 Federal rule required States to cover children in unsuitable homes so long as they remained in those homes. Thus, the size and composition of AFDC became a Federal issue.

*Welfare Reform in the 1960's.* Reformers sought to limit AFDC's growth and advocated social services to help recipients live independently. Incentives were proposed to encourage AFDC mothers to work. President Johnson's "War on Poverty" prompted interest in setting a floor under family income; but opponents of the welfare bureaucracy preferred that an income floor be offered through the income tax system (a "negative income tax") instead of AFDC. To encourage work by AFDC parents, Congress enacted in 1967 the "$30 and 1/3" earnings disregard (i.e., an exclusion of the first $30 of monthly wages plus one-third of additional wages in calculating AFDC benefit amounts). This law authorized employment services through the work incentive (WIN) program, requiring enrollment by AFDC parents with no children under age six. Congress voted to "freeze" the size of AFDC, but repealed this law before it took effect because of resistance from the states.

*Welfare Reform in the 1970's.* President Nixon, responding to concerns about AFDC's costs and inequities and the rising rate of single-parent families, proposed a Family Assistance Plan (FAP) to replace AFDC with a nationally uniform Federal income floor. States with high AFDC benefit levels could add to FAP payments, but all States would be assured of AFDC savings whether or not they supplemented FAP. A work requirement would apply to parents with no child under age of six. The House passed FAP twice, but it never passed the Senate.

Though Congress did not federalize AFDC, it did respond to pressure to improve benefits for low-income people in several ways: Some aid to needy aged, blind, and disabled persons became the Federal Supplementary Security Income (SSI) program; an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for low-income working families with children was enacted; a program to enforce child support orders against absent parents was begun; and food stamp benefits, then offered at county option, were increased and made available nationally.

President Carter revived the idea of federalizing AFDC with his Program for Better Jobs and Income. This proposal responded to criticism that FAP would have expanded welfare rolls by offering a stronger work requirement and a job guarantee for family breadwinners who could not find work, but Congress did not enact it.

*Welfare Reform in the 1980's.* Ronald Reagan, as California's Governor, opposed President Nixon's FAP proposal. On becoming President, Reagan successfully urged Congress to reduce AFDC costs by removing its earnings disregard, thereby ending eligibility for some AFDC families with earnings. Congress rejected his proposal to require "workfare" (requiring certain recipients to "work off" their AFDC grants in community service jobs) but gave States this option and allowed them to design their own "welfare-to-work" programs. Food stamp eligibility was also reduced.

A "new federalism" plan offered by President Reagan in 1982 to turn over funding and responsibility for AFDC and food stamps to the States in exchange for Federal responsibility for Medicaid was not enacted.

Continued dissatisfactin with AFDC work requirements and employment services led Congress to pass the Family Support Act of 1988, which strengthened State child support enforcement and created the JOB Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program to facilitate the education and employment of AFDC adults.

Results under JOBS have lagged behind the aspirations of its advocates in moving people into employment. Meanwhile, AFDC rolls have continued to rise, even in times of economic growth, and concern has grown about long stays on AFDC and multi-generational dependency by some families.

*Workfare Policy Issues*. When public benefits are received, a recipient's financial work incentive is affected in two ways. First, a guarantee of income with work lessens the desire to attain more income by working. Second, the income level attainable from work is affected by the benefit reduction rate, the rate at which the income guarantee is withdrawn as earnings increase. When benefit reduction rates are high, they discourage additional work for reportable earnings and/or encourage work for hidden income in the the "underground economy."

To improve work incentives, benefits could be cut, yielding lower incomes for those who did not find work, an approach that would hurt families whose heads could not secure regular employment. Alternatively, the rate at which benefits are reduced as earnings rise could be lowered (a lower "tax" rate), but that would extend welfare eligibility to higher income levels, increasing caseloads and costs unless the stronger incentive was highly effective in leading recipients to work more.

Work requirements can alter work incentives of welfare by taking away all or part of an income guarantee if certain conditions go unmet. Stronger work requirements could be applied to AFDC, with sanctions for families not in compliance. Both the 1994 Clinton bill and the "Contract with America" proposal take this approach, treating AFDC as a temporary benefit that would end after a maximum eligibility period.

Experience with Unemployment Insurance (UI) shows that most recipients find work soon after benefits cease, but the relevance to AFDC is limited to two factors: most AFDC recipients are less employable than UI claimants and find it harder to get jobs; and loss of AFDC is usually offset in part by increased food stamps, which reduces the effect of sanctions. A block grant approach could allow States to merge food stamp and AFDC benefits and eliminate the latter effect.

*Future of Welfare Reform*: As John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene pointed out in the book, "*Megatrends 2000*", workfare programs afford liberals and conservatives the opportunity to carve out common ground. For conservatives there's the work ethic aspect and the new social contract: Workfare is not a handout, but a two-way street. For liberals there's the emphasis on job placement and training, the voluntary nature of most programs. Many people believe that people on welfare must begin to live by the same rules of reciprocity--giving something in order to get something--that other nondependent Americans live by. Welfare must begin to mean obligations as well as rights.

Naisbitt and Aburdene correctly predicted that during the 1990's there would be a basic shift (nationally and internationally) from central government to individual empowerment:

**From public housing to homeownership**
**From national health service to private options**
**From government regulation to market mechanisms**
**From welfare to workfare**
**From collectivism to individualism**
**From government monopoly to competitive enterprise**
**From state industries to privatize companies**
**From government Social Security plans to private insurance and investment**
**From tax burdens to tax reductions**

**"As we move toward the next century, governments all over the world are in the process of reconceptualizing society's responsibility to its citizens, especially those citizens who truly cannot help themselves. This process of working out what will replace the welfare state--working out what the postwelfare state will look like--will surely continue for the decade left in this century."**
(Naisbitt & Aburdene, P.176-177)

There are many similarities between this "megatrend" and the natural law/laissez-faire movement of the early 1800's, i.e. individual rights over collective rights, emphasis on individual responsibility, what is good for the individual is good for the whole, and the undercurrent of individual weakness being responsible for poverty. What remains to be seen is how this trend deals with the social/economic forces which also cause poverty, unemployment, disease, and crime.

The goals of increasing individual responsibility and gainful employment for everyone are often conflicting political goals. As Representative George Brown noted in a recent speech, there is an estimated 5,280 public and private sector jobs available in San Bernardino County and 64,000 AFDC families. The current trend in both the public and private sector is downsizing. The private sector is not geared for full employment. Also, there is the issue of the working poor with the problems of low minimum wage, affordable health care, affordable housing, etc. Many of these problems require collective or governmental solutions which have historically meant a larger role for government. A larger role for government is frequently opposed by politicians who advocate increased personal responsibility.

One conclusion is that serious "work-for-benefit" requirements will involve an element of public sector positions, but this runs counter to the "less government" movement. The public sector (i.e. Forest Service, BLM, etc.) has the need and there are many people needing the positive influences of meaningful work, but this again runs counter to less government movement. One thing is absolutely sure about the future of welfare reform and that is the existence of paradoxes, especially the paradoxes of what we need and what we want.

This does not mean the situation is hopeless! In the midst of a difficult problem, the Danish physicist Niels Bohr was overheard to say, "How wonderful that we've met with a paradox. Now we have hope of making some progress." Bohr knew that paradoxes are crucial to the creative process because they "whack" you out of narrow thought paths and force you to question your assumptions. Indeed, the very act of "seeing the paradox" is at the crux of creative thinking--the ability to entertain two different, often contradictory, notions at the same time. (Willett, P. 118) Winston Churchill once observed, **"Americans always find the right solution, but only after trying every other alternative."** There is hope for meaningful reform, but the amount of time it will take is unknown.

What does this mean to HRP managers as the "winds-of-reform" swirl around them? Here's some key points to keep in mind:

* Be alert for the opportunity to be involved with your local community by employing people in meaningful community service positions.

* No matter what course reform takes, fair or unfair, there will be some opportunities to make a difference in a few peoples' lifes and to involve a different segment of the community in the management of public lands.

* There are many people in other organizations who are grappling with the issues of community service, rural development, welfare reform, resource conservation, etc. If they are progressive in nature, they will welcome the opportunity to develop partnerships to meet mutual goals.

## CHAPTER 5 - WELFARE REFORM IN WISCONSIN

**"No other technique for the conduct of life attaches the individual so firmly to reality as laying emphasis on work; for his work at least gives him a secure place in a portion of reality, in the human community." Sigmund Freud**

The following information is summarized from "Welfare Reform in Wisconsin", May 1995. Wisconsin is viewed by many as a trendsetter in the Nation in the area of welfare reform. Welfare reform in Wisconsin is viewed as being successful and a good indicator of the direction other states may follow in the area of welfare reform. The following is from the State of Wisconsin, Welfare Reform Summary, May 1995:

**Background: Governor Thompson campaigned on a platform welfare reform. After his election, beginning in 1987, major changes were made in Wisconsin's welfare system. At the time of Governor Thompson's inauguration, nearly 300,000 Wisconsin residents (98,295 cases) received AFDC benefits. As of December 1994, that number had declined to 213,685 (73,714 cases). Wisconsin is often cited in the national debate as an example of innovative welfare reform.**

**Part of Wisconsin's success in lowering the AFDC caseload is due to low unemployment rates, but not all of the success can be attributed to the strong economy. Wisconsin ranks 14th lowest in unemployment over the past six years but the other 13 states with even lower unemployment increased their caseloads by 35%, while Wisconsin's dropped by 25%. In fact, only two other states (Iowa & Illinois) have experienced a caseload drop at all, and Wisconsin's drop is greater the the other two combined. The drop in caseloads is not attributable to low benefit levels because Wisconsin's AFDC benefit levels are the 12th highest in the nation.**

**Goals: The stated goals of Wisconsin's welfare reform initiatives put in place in 1987 are to break the chains of welfare dependency by:**

**Removing all disincentives to work.**

**Providing recipients with the tools they need to go to work through education and training programs, child care, health care, and transportation to transition into the work force.**

**Ensuring that parents contribute to the financial well-being of their children. Child support enforcement is a key part of Wisconsin's welfare reform.**

**Helping all families, both intact and those headed by single parents, to become and remain self-sufficient.**

**In 1987, Wisconsin obtained waivers from federal laws and regulations to implement many of the provisions in our welfare reform initiative. These waivers enabled the state to implement innovative programs including Learnfare, a comprehensive employment and training program, extended health care benefits for families who leave AFDC for employment and training and child support programs. The federal Family Support Act, passed October 1988, is mirrored after Wisconsin's employment and training and child support programs. Wisconsin's Work Not Welfare pilot program is the nation's first test of time-limited cash benefits.**

**Welfare reform is viewed as being very successful in Wisconsin because there has been a 25% reduction in AFDC caseload and the state has saved $16.1 million between January of 1987 and December of 1994. The caseload reduction is due to the good economy, job creation, and successful welfare reform programs. The state has negotiated with the federal government to use funds to implement several statewide and numerous local demonstration projects providing services to AFDC recipients.**

**Employment and training programs form the foundation for Wisconsin's welfare reform efforts. There is a comprehensive JOBS program for AFDC recipients in all 72 counties and 11 tribes. Annually, over $22 million in state funds are allocated to operate the JOBS program. The goal is to facilitate the utilization of personal and societal resources to empower an individual to maximize his or her own economic self-sufficiency, without dependency on government financial assistance.**

**Future:** The State of Wisconsin plans to push numerous changes in the future. Wisconsin will convert the prime federal grant, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, into a work subsidy in 1997 -- in effect, forcing able-bodied welfare recipients off the dole within two years. Those who find work will be provided with 12 months of child and health care, and employers are likely to get a subsidy to train and hire welfare recipients. **"Only work will pay for those who can work,"** says J. Jean Rogers, a senior official in the Wisconsin Department of Human Services. **"You will get a check as reinforcement for appropriate behavior."** (Melcher, August 7, 1995)

The big questions that remain about welfare reform in Wisconsin are how the state would fare in an economic downturn and what to do about the high rate of people returning for benefits (30% to 40% within a year). High return rates are usually due to people being trapped in low-paying jobs and facing a cut-off in child care and health benefits they cannot afford on their own. For true long-term success, the national issues of high health care costs, high costs of daycare, and low minimum wage will have to be addressed. (Ibid)

The positive side of the welfare reform movement in Wisconsin, as noted by Sigmund Freud, recognizes the constructive benefits of work on a person's life. Most states have similar programs established or in the process of being established. *One of the first steps a HRP manager should take to employ community service individuals is to contact their local Human Services Department.*

## CHAPTER 6 - COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

Whenever there is the potential for a ***transfer of funds*** between the Forest Service and another external relation, a cooperative agreement (as opposed to a Memoranda of Understanding) needs to be completed. Work closely with the appropriate administrative personnel to handle transfer of fund agreements and to ***keep yourself out of trouble***!

As stated in the FSM 1500, "At the international, national, and local levels, the Forest Service has both formal and informal working relations with others outside the Forest Service."

> **"Through authorized channels, the Forest Service works with the Congress in legislative matters. In many activities it works with other Federal agencies and establishments, and with States and local governmental organizations. Similarly, it cooperates directly and indirectly with international organizations and with governments of friendly nations. In addition, the Forest Service has working relationships of many kinds with nongovermental groups; such as business firms, trade associations, and civic groups."**
>
> **"Some of the working relationships are a result of laws; some follow from Executive Orders, Department regulations, or contracts and agreements. In other cases, the working relationships develop from a mutual interest in related fields of activity."**

The manual further explains that the objective for the Forest Service is to conduct its external relations with business like efficiency, to conform with policy instructions, and to encourage the development of sound forestry and a forestry consciousness throughout the world. It is Forest Service policy to enter into service-wide agreements with various external entities when an arrangement is authorized; an agreement is mutually beneficial; and an agreement will coordinate efforts, and eliminate duplication and waste.

In order to conduct our external business relationships in a professional manner, a **cooperative agreement** (Exhibit A) is necessary as well as a financial project plan (Exhibit B). Cooperative agreements consist of:

(1) ***Background and Objectives.*** This section identifies the parties that are entering into the agreement and states the areas of mutual interest.

(2) ***Statement of Work.*** This section identifies the separate areas that each party is responsible for and the areas that ***both*** parties are responsible for.

(3) ***Signature Block.*** Cooperative agreements need to be signed by the heads of each agency. If the agreement is applicable only to the Forest level, it is signed by the forest supervisor.

Cooperative agreements may be cancelled at any time by either party. Enter into the agreement all areas that will remain constant for the term of the agreement. Areas of responsibility that may change from year-to-year should be stated in a **yearly operating plan** (Exhibit C). Examples: financial responsibilities, supervision, transportation, worker's compensation, tort claims, relations with other organizations, and any other areas subject to change. Wise use of the yearly plan gives your program flexibility and saves the hassle of authorizing new cooperative agreements to handle minor changes.

Exhibit A is a sample cooperative agreement that you may use for developing your own agreements. Examples may also be found in the FSM under 1566.21a. Note that this agreement may be used for placing individuals and/or developing crews to work for your agency. The crew example shown in the yearly operating plan will have a direct cost to the Forest Service of approximately $2,000 for a 6 person crew for 12 weeks. This is very *cost effective*! Also, individuals working with only the expense of supervision and support is a bargain for the State of Wisconsin. A sample crew work schedule form is provided in Exhibit D and a more detailed economic analysis is provided in Exhibit E.

**(Exhibit A)**

PARTICIPATING AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
PRICE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
AND
U.S.D.A DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
CHEQUAMEGON/NICOLET NATIONAL FORESTS

ARTICLE I: BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

This agreement is made between Wisconsin's Health and Human Services Department, a non-profit Wisconsin State Agency, hereafter called HSD, with its principal place of business at 104 South Eyder Avenue - P.O. Box 88 - Normal Building - Phillips, WI 54555, and the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, hereinafter called the Service, acting under the provisions of P.L. 94-148 dated December 12, 1975 (16 USC 565a-1), wherein authority is delegated to enter into cooperative arrangements where the primary purpose is to enhance manpower, job training and development programs. This Agreement supersedes and cancels all previous agreements entered into between the HSD and the Service.

WITNESSETH,

WHEREAS, the Service has the responsibilities for administration of the lands in the National Forest System, and for other lands administered by the Forest Service; and

WHEREAS, the Service recognizes the advantages of using the services provided by cooperating organizations in the administration of these lands; and

WHEREAS, the HSD offers participants in various state support programs the opportunity to earn wages and learn how to increase their value to employers.

WHEREAS, both parties to the Agreement deem it mutually advantageous that participants in this program broaden and develop the scope of their work experience by providing their services to the Service:

Now, therefore, in consideration of the above premises, the parties hereto agree as follows:

ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF WORK

A. *THE HSD AGREES:*

1. To refer, if available, the agreed upon number of participants to the Service for work experience.

2. To provide a detailed explanation of the program and to furnish time sheets upon which the Service will record attendance and hours of participation.

3. To provide supervision and transportation for crews as specified in the yearly operating plan.

4. To provide coverage for any workmen's compensation claims for on-the-job injuries or occupational illness.

B. *SERVICE AGREES:*

1. Not to displace regular employees with HSD Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) participants.

2. To furnish supplies as necessary to enable the participant(s) to perform assigned tasks and activities.

3. To accept only that number of HSD-CWEP participants who can be utilized productively.

4. To provide supervision and training as agreed in yearly operating plan.

5. To prepare time sheets for each participant certifying the day and actual hours of participation as agreed in the yearly operating plan.

6. To provide comments on each participant's or crews performance including their initiative, cooperation, and ability to perform assigned tasks.

7. Upon notification or otherwise becoming aware of an existing or potential problems of health or safety, the Service shall promptly notify the HSD program director and crew supervisor of concerns.

8. To provide coverage for tort claims for damage to personal property due to on-the-job accidents.

C. *IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED:*

1. The purpose of these programs is designed to place and/or train state program participants in jobs and training. The ultimate goal is to obtain meaningful employment for participants to reduce welfare caseloads. Employability assessments will be completed on each client prior to referral to job site. Job sites will have an opportunity to interview clients before placing them if they so desire. For purposes of this program, participants are considered employees of Price County.

2. That service under this Agreement shall not be counted toward the accumulation of, or eligibility for, benefits available to Federal employees. However, for the purposes of tort claims provision of Title 28 of the United States Code and for the purposes of Subchapter 1 of Chapter 81 of Title 5 of the United States Code relating to work injuries, participants shall be deemed federal employees.

3. Participants will have a background check through the local police department to ensure that they represent no unusual risk to employees or the public.

4. Participants will behave in a good host manner to the public and abide by the Standards of Ethical Conduct of Employees of the Executive Branch including Part I of Executive Order 12674 and 5 C.F.R. Part 2635 Regulation.

5. That discrimination against participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status is prohibited.

6. That the Service may employ a participant under separate employment authority, with the participant's concurrence, for work of an emergency or temporary nature such as fire-fighting, flood control, or other emergency work. During the time the participant is employed under separate authority, the participant will not be covered by this Agreement. As soon as this employment is terminated, the participant will revert back to coverage under this Agreement. The Service will notify the Association Promptly of the date employment began and ended.

7. That provisions of this Agreement are imposed upon and are a part of the required Yearly Operating Plan which may involve agreements with mutually agreed upon third parties such as other state, local, and federal agencies, non-profit and educational institutions.

8. That nothing in the Agreement shall be construed as obligating the Service to expend, or as involving the United States in any contract or other obligation for the future payment of money in excess of appropriations authorized by laws and administratively allocated for this work. Further, it is understood that all projects are also subject to availability of applicants and funds provided by the HSD.

9. That no member, of, or delegate to, Congress or Resident Commissioners shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement, or to any benefit that may arise therefrom; but this provision shall not be construed to extend to this Agreement if made with a corporation for its general benefit.

10. That the Agreement will exist in perpetuity although this Agreement may be terminated at any time by mutual agreement of both parties or by unilateral decision of either party provided at least one hundred and eighty (180) days written notice is given to the other party.

In witness thereof, the parties hereto have signed their names and executed this Master Agreement as of the last date below.

Forest Supervisor

Date

Price County Human Services Director

Date

**(Exhibit B)**

FINANCIAL PROJECT PLAN
(PROJECT TITLE)

*FOREST SERVICE CONTRIBUTION*

| | *FS* | *PARTICIPATOR* | *TOTAL* |
|---|---|---|---|
| SALARIES | $ | $ | $ |
| TRAVEL | $ | $ | $ |
| SUPPLIES | $ | $ | $ |
| EQUIPMENT | $ | $ | $ |
| USE | | | |
| TOTAL DIRECT COST | $ | $ 1/ | $ |
| ADD: INDIRECT COST | $ | | $ |
| TOTAL FS CONTRIBUTION | | | $ $ |

*PARTICIPATOR CONTRIBUTION*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| SALARIES | $ | $ | $ |
| TRAVEL | $ | $ | $ |
| SUPPLIES | $ | $ | $ |
| EQUIPMENT | $ | $ | $ |
| USE | | | |
| TOTAL DIRECT COST | $ 2/ | $ | $ |
| ADD: INDIRECT COST | | $ | $ |
| ADD: VALUE OF CONTRIBUTIONS WHERE THE PARTICIPATOR INCURS NO COST (eg., voluntary labor May be used only to satisfy matching requirement-not reimbursable.) | | $ | $ |
| TOTAL PARTICIPATOR CONTRIBUTION | | | $ $ |
| PROJECT TOTAL | | | $ |

Total FS Share % of Project Value
Participator Share % of Project Value

1/ ESTIMATED PAYMENT TO PARTICIPATOR
2/ AMOUNT TO BE COLLECTED

REIMBURSEMENT WILL BE MADE ONLY UPON ACTUAL EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE PARTICIPATOR, NOT TO EXCEED ESTIMATED PAYMENT (see 1/).

**(Exhibit C)**

1996 YEARLY OPERATING PLAN

For FY 1996, the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest, Price County Human Services, and the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point will form a crew of six community service enrollees to perform conservation related work on National Forest Land. The following is agreed to by all concerned parties:

1. University of Wisconsin will provide candidates for a supervisor of the crew from their internship program. Supervisor will be paid at GS-5 rate of $9.30 per hour for an twelve week program. Supervisor will be a federal employee.

2. Selection of supervisor will be a mutual process between Price County and Forest Service.

3. Supervisor will be paid by Price County or State of Wisconsin funds with an estimated cost of $4,500 for the season.

4. Forest Service will provide transportation, tools, and all necessary safety gear for enrollees.

5. If a suitable employee is not located through University of Wisconsin, recruitment for a temporary position with the Forest Service will be the next alternative. Recruitment process will be flexible to supply the widest pool of candidates possible.

6. Projects may be performed on public lands at the Federal, State, County, or City level. Projects will be predominately Federal.

7. Program season will be from June 3, 1996, to August 30, 1996. Supervisor will start the previous week for orientation and continue through September 6, 1996, for program close-out and review.

Forest Supervisor

Price County Human Services Department

**(Exhibit D)**

*COMMUNITY SERVICE CREW WORK SCHEDULE*

| *WEEK* | *DATE* | *PROJECT* | *MATERIALS & TOOLS* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 6/3-7 | | |
| 2 | 6/10-14 | | |
| 3 | 6/17-21 | | |
| 4 | 7/1-5 * | | |
| 5 | 7/8-12 | | |
| 6 | 7/15-19 | | |
| 7 | 7/22-26 | | |
| 8 | 7/29-8/2 | | |
| 9 | 8/5-9 | | |
| 10 | 8/12-16 | | |
| 11 | 8/19-23 | | |
| 12 | 8/26-30 | | |
| 13 | 9/2-6 * | | |
| 14 | | | |

* FOUR DAY WEEK DUE TO HOLIDAY.

**(Exhibit D)**

*COMMUNITY SERVICE CREW WORK SCHEDULE*

| *WEEK* | *DATE* | *PROJECT* | *MATERIALS & TOOLS* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 6/3-7 | | |
| 2 | 6/10-14 | | |
| 3 | 6/17-21 | | |
| 4 | 7/1-5 * | | |
| 5 | 7/8-12 | | |
| 6 | 7/15-19 | | |
| 7 | 7/22-26 | | |
| 8 | 7/29-8/2 | | |
| 9 | 8/5-9 | | |
| 10 | 8/12-16 | | |
| 11 | 8/19-23 | | |
| 12 | 8/26-30 | | |
| 13 | 9/2-6 * | | |
| 14 | | | |

* FOUR DAY WEEK DUE TO HOLIDAY.

**(Exhibit E)**

***Sample Economic Analysis Community Service Program***

| *Item* | *Forest Service* | *State* |
|---|---|---|
| Vehicle | $1,500 | - |
| Supplies | 500 | - |
| Salaries | - | *$4,500* |
| Subtotal | $2,000 | $4,500 |
| **TOTAL** | **$6,500** | |

***Sample Forest Service Crew***

| *Item* | *Forest Service* |
|---|---|
| Vehicle | $1,500 |
| Supplies | 500 |
| Administration | $2,000 |
| Salaries | *$9,000* |
| **TOTAL** | **$13,000** |

The economic analysis of the programs above are conservative in nature. Potential costs of accidents and unemployment insurance are not figured into the hypothetical Forest Service crew. Administration costs are also figured conservatively when additional costs of training and support of government employees is factored into the equation.

Clearly, the "fielding" of a supervised crew of 5 people for a cost to the Forest Service of $2,000 and a cost of $4,500 to the state is a bargain for both agencies!

## CHAPTER 7 - PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

**"The American Dream...has not been a dream of merely material plenty, though that has doubtlessly counted heavily. It has been much more than that. It has been a dream of being able to grow to fullest development as man and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class. And that dream has been realized more fully in actual life here than anywhere else, though very imperfectly..." J. Adams**

**"...We must preserve not only the bodies of the unemployed from destitution but also their self-respect, their self-reliance and courage and determination." President Franklin Roosevelt**

As historian James Truslow Adams stated so eloquently in 1941, we Americans are interested in each person being able to grow to their fullest potential. That is what the nobler portion of the welfare debate is about, each person being able to contribute to their community to their fullest potential. Without a doubt, we will be far from perfect in reaching this goal. The question for the HRP manager is how do we manage our programs to provide the most help possible for the people we serve in an imperfect society?

One answer is that we should manage our community service programs the same as a successful volunteer program. Focus on the overlapping needs of each individual and the needs of the organization. The object is for this to be a rewarding experience for both parties. Participants in community service programs should be treated as valuable volunteers. Many of the rules for successful program management are the same as volunteer management. Community service participants are usually short-term employees seeking work experience, needing individual attention, and are not being paid direct wages for work performed.

McCurly and Lynch in their book on "Essential Volunteer Management, 1989, made some excellent observations on management of HRP programs. **The process** of volunteer management involves the following operations:

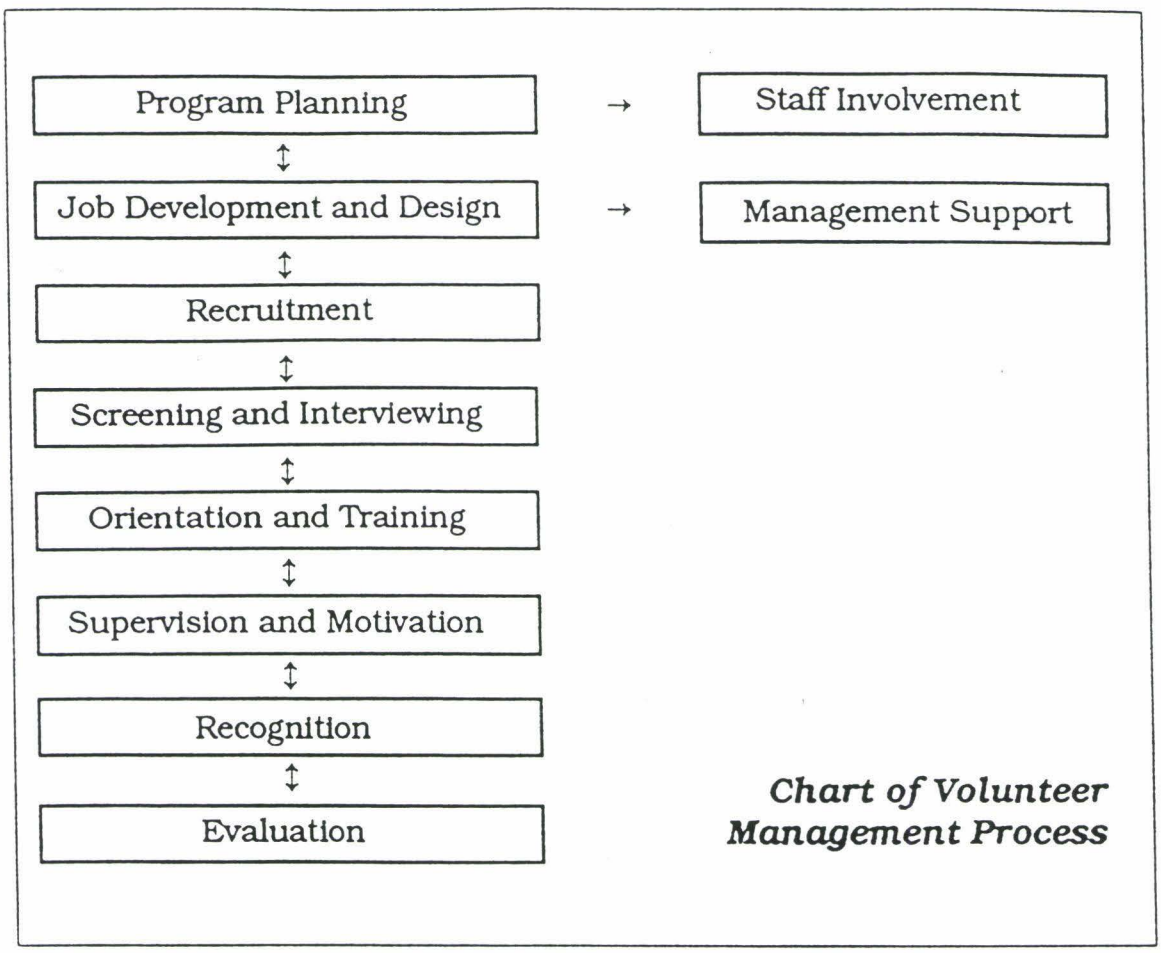



***Chart of Volunteer Management Process***

**At any given moment, the normal volunteer** (community service) **program will be engaged, to one degree or another, in all of these processes.**

**The key to this process is the manager. Programs do not work spontaneously, but require someone to devote the care and attention required for fitting together a complex system matching the needs of the agency with the needs of the individual.**

**The best analogy for an effective HRP manager is that of a consultant - the role requires working with other staff in the agency to analyze what needs to be done, what can be done by the worker, and what will be attractive enough to motivate those workers. As a consultant, the HRP manager must focus on meeting the needs both of staff and of participants.**

**Performing this role effectively requires the ability to relate well with people and to understand both their needs and wants; the ability to be flexible and adapt to changing demands and interests; and the ability to be creatively opportunistic, to identify a potential opportunity, and create the structure which is necessary to make that opportunity happen.**

**The manager is responsible both for designing the overall puzzle shape and for fitting together the individual pieces that complete the puzzle. This has to be done in concert with both staff, who design the parameters, and participants, who help determine the design of individual jobs.**

Where workfare or community service programs vary from the Forest Service's typical volunteer programs is that the participants are being required to report for work, and their performance is being monitored by their case worker. The expectation of the case worker may be as simple as helping the person to develop good, basic work habits such as reporting to work on time and scheduling personal life around work.

Another variance from regular volunteer programs is that the person will frequently be suffering from a feeling of hopelessness and depression due to a prolonged period of unemployment. Positive interaction with co-workers and doing something constructive can be of enormous benefit to these people. Be careful to never let the negative attitudes and stereotypes about people on welfare affect your program. Work is a positive life force and a reward, not a punishment!

As William Raspberry noted in a recent editorial, **"It isn't financial dependency that creates the frustration and despair that sometimes overwhelm poor people. It is helplessness--the belief, daily reinforced, that they cannot make any significant difference in their world, in their immediate neighborhoods or in their own lives."**

> Mr. Raspberry goes on to point out, **"...it is not dependency that robs people of their initiative or morality, many college students are much more dependent on their parents and do not suffer negative effects! It isn't dependency or a lack of desire to do better that keeps people trapped; it's the fear-bordering-on-certainty that they can't do anything about their condition. The cure is not to eliminate the dependency, but to instill the confidence that their efforts matter, that they have gifts to share."**
>
> **"We need to teach people--all people, but especially our children--not to define themselves in terms of their income or its sources but in their potential for being useful...and we need to teach ourselves that we can't do these things solely by transforming the welfare system. The feeling of efficacy and sense of social obligation cannot be delivered along with a welfare check. Or, for that matter, with a seven-figure bequest."** (William Raspberry, 1992)

Volunteer program managers are usually dealing with highly motivated individuals who are working for altruistic reasons. Naturally, community service programs will have higher "failure" rates and greater numbers of people who are dealing with significant personal problems. *One of the program's goals should be to help people who are ready to help themselves and refer others back to their case managers who are not ready to help themselves.* For those who are ready to help themselves, take advantage of every opportunity to emphasize that their work is valuable and they are part of the Forest Service "family" while they work there.

Private businesses generally are not willing to handle the more difficult cases for case managers. Government agencies can provide a valuable service to case managers by providing simple tasks for some of their more difficult cases. Some people will not make it past the first interview. Do not view these as "failures", case managers will appreciate your efforts and you will find people who are "gems".

It is the nature of programs that deal with such large issues as public assistance for the poor, hungry, and homeless, that the problems begin to seem unsolvable. ***Do not let these feelings drag your program down.*** On the large scale, they will appear unsolvable. On the small scale, dealing with individuals, you can make a "world-of-difference" for some people. Clarence Page (1991) noted in a recent article, **"Words like 'permanent', 'irreducible' and 'unending' pop up routinely in stories about the underclass, constantly re-emphasizing the powerful message that the 'underclass', alas, is hopeless, a message that skews public debate from constructive questions such as 'How can we best help the poor?' to insidious questions such as 'Why should we help the poor at all?"**

> *Program Rationale*. **McCurley and Lynch noted that the first step in constructing the design of an agency's community service program requires determining why the agency wishes to involve these people. The decision will influence the following:**
>
> 1. **It will determine the types of jobs and responsibilities that the agency will create for participants.**
> 2. **It will enable the agency to better explain to participants how and why they are contributing to the work of the agency.**
> 3. **It will enable the agency to better explain to staff why participants are being sought.**
> 4. **It will enable the agency to develop a plan for evaluating whether the utilization of participants has been effective.**

There are many potential rationales for involving community service participants. These include:

1. Providing for community outreach or input.
2. Supplementing staff resources and experiences.
3. Giving a more personal touch in services to clients.
4. Helping to improve the quality of life in the community.
5. Cost savings.

*Staff Involvement.* It is highly desirable that some agreement be reached on this rationale. In a sense, the rationale will represent part of the "mission" of the community service program. It will provide a quick and clear understanding of what benefit the agency thinks will be derived from utilization of participants, and provide a sense of purpose for the community service program. In essence, it should answer "why are we doing this?"

It is also essential to have the support of the top management of the agency. This support might be represented by a position statement on community service programs from the Forest Supervisor or the Director of your agency.

It is important to note, however, that while it is desirable to have top management support for utilization of participants, it is not desirable to have that support become coercive in nature. *It is not possible for management to compel staff to utilize participants.* Opposing staff can too easily drive participants away or can too easily make it impossible for them to be successful. What is desirable is an attitude of top management that encourages and rewards effective utilization by staff of human resources, an approach using the "carrot" not the "stick".

*Organizational Climate.* Overall organizational climate will also influence how rewarding the program will be to the participants and the organization. What is needed is a sense of common mission and purpose, and an understanding that productive steps are being taken toward accomplishment of that mission and purpose. Make every effort to have the participant feel like they are part of the organization. Talk about past successes of other participants and your hopes for them. "Put yourself in their shoes" and remind yourself how important recognition of work well done is for a person who is trying to lift themselves out of poverty.

An organizational climate that is favorable toward participants will communicate the feelings of *acceptance* and *appreciation*. People need to feel welcome by and connected with the overall purpose and operations of the agency. Each person has a unique, recognized contribution to make to the purpose and operations of the agency. Make sure new participants are introduced at family meetings and are made to feel part of the workforce.

* Ensure that participants have one supervisor who can act as their mentor. This will ensure that both the agency and the participant are receiving maximum benefit from the program.

*Policies and Procedures*. Any new HRP requires the creation of some formal rules and procedures. After determination of why community service individuals are to be utilized, the agency will need to develop its own set of polices and procedures governing their utilization. Policies should be developed in the following areas:

1. Attendance and leave.
2. Performance review procedures.
3. Benefits: facilities, training, parking.
4. Grievance procedures.
5. Reimbursement policies.
6. Use of agency equipment.
7. Confidentiality requirements.
8. Disciplinary or corrective action.
9. Record-keeping requirements.

These policies will allow the HRP manager to develop a consistent pattern of participant utilization, and will provide assistance in dealing with problem situations. Both supervisors and participants need an indepth understanding of the rules. If a participant is not adapting to the requirements for a position, this is cause enough to refer them back to their case manager. The personnel process for resolving problems should be fair and brief. ***DO NOT*** overcomplicate this process.

*Community service agreements should have the referring agency responsible for all disciplinary actions when problems are referred to them.* If a participant requires too much of your time, have the understanding that they may be referred back to the referring agency at any time. Just like a volunteer agreement, the agreement can be terminated at anytime by either party. This understanding is what will make the program manageable when you encounter participants who have problems that become too time-consuming and/or adversely affect other co-workers.

The community service program will need some basic personnel-related processes. Essential forms for timesheets and evaluations should be provided by the referring agency (participants are technically their employees). Individual records and copies of timesheets must be kept for each participant. This will make your required HRP reports much easier to compile.

A necessary part of the hiring package and the initial interview is a background or suitability check with a local law enforcement agency and past employers. *Be careful not to bring anyone into the workforce who will present a danger to co-workers or public or who will not represent your agency in a professional manner.* Referring agencies are usually very careful in this area, but you need to be responsible for double-checking in the area of security and safety. Your local Human Resource Officer, in the Forest Service, can guide you in the suitability requirements. Note: background checks are a normal requirement for government service, this is not something special for "those people". This requirement can usually be handled in a 15 minute visit with the local law enforcement officials and a couple of phone calls to past employers.

Take the time to do monthly evaluations with participants. They will appreciate positive feedback and so will the referring agency. Evaluation forms should be provided to you by the referring agency. Reward with non-monetary awards when possible and praise good work. Let people know how much they are contributing and the benefits to your agency.

*Screening.* **Community service programs where individuals are being "required" or given the "opportunity" to work (depends on individual), need to have attention paid to "fitting" the individual to the position. "Fit" is the interpersonal matching of the needs and interests of the person with the needs and interests of the agency. An examination of proper fit would include determining three items regarding the participant:**

1. **To what extent does the participant have both an interest in a particular job and the requisite qualifications to perform that job?**

2. **What talents do the participant have that might be used to create a different job for them?**

3. **To what extent does the participant have a "rightness" for working well in a particular job environment?**

**In many cases, "Rightness", which involves the likelihood that the person will fit comfortablely into the agency working environment, will be the key predictive factor for success. 'Rightness' could involve questions of style (relaxed, frantic), personality (neat, messy; introverted, extroverted; field oriented or office oriented), behavior (smoking, non-smoking) or other items which would affect how the volunteer will get along, both with the agency in general and with a particular staff group with whom they might be assigned. Very often these interpersonal relationship factors become more important than factors of technical qualification, which can be learned if the participant stays with the agency. Simply put: a person who is happy in their working environment will make the job happen; one who is unhappy will not try to.**

*Key Point.* **Do not try to "shove round pegs into square holes". Work instead on developing a proper fit between the agency and the workfare participant. Time spent getting the correct match will be saved later in a lessened need for supervision and corrective action**

*Orientation*. Orientation is the process of making people understand and feel comfortable with the workings of the agency. It is designed to provide them with background and practical information that will be used to relate what they are doing with the overall functions of the agency and to better understand how they can contribute to the purpose of the agency. If the person better understands the agency's systems, operations and procedures, the person will be better able to contribute productively.

Orientation content will vary from agency to agency, but should cover the following sorts of topics:

1. Description of the program.
2. Description and history of the agency.
3. Description of programs and clientele.
4. Sketch of organizational chart, and introduction of key staff.
5. Timelines and description of major organizational events and activities.
6. Orientation to facilities and equipment.
7. Description of personnel procedures: recordkeeping requirements, benefits, training, supervision, etc.
8. Work expectations and goals.

The simplest way to develop the agenda for the orientation session is to ask yourself, "What would I like to know about this place in order to understand how it works?" Remember that a person who fully understands the organization can well serve as an effective communicator with the public about the worth of the organization, while a confused person can present quite the opposite picture.

Once a person is placed in a position, visit with them regularly to ensure that they are receiving the necessary training for their position. Make sure they have the following information:

1. This is what you should do and accomplish in your job.
2. This is what you should not do.
3. This is what you should do if the following situation arises.

Regardless of whether you are utilizing formal training, coaching or counseling, remember that the point is to make sure that participants learn from the experience. The mix of methods which you choose may vary from person to person, and even will vary over the term of the person's relationship with the agency. (McCurley & Lynch, 1989)

In summary, community service programs require the same maintenance and care that any other HRP program requires. Keep the following key points in mind for the management of your program:

1. Resist the impluse to quickly initiate a program without the proper groundwork.
2. Get management and co-workers to commit to supporting the program.
3. Fit the person(s) to a situation that is suitable for their talents.
4. Help participants to feel like a valuable part of the organization.
5. Realize in advance that the program is not free. It requires time and commitment, but the results are very rewarding.
6. Evaluate your agency's needs, i.e. projects, customer service goals, agency goals for community involvement, etc.
7. Contact heads of interested agencies, i.e. federal, state, and local governments; charitable organizations; tribal governments; correctional institutions; and volunteer groups.
8. Discuss areas where goals and objectives overlap. Examples: one agency needs work experience for clients and the other needs campground rehabilitated.
9. Explore possibilities for combining resources to develop programs for individuals, crews, and production of goods or services.
10. *Explore other agencies, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions joining in the program i.e., student internships for supervisors, college credits for work experience for participants, correctional institutions for construction or labor, etc.*
11. Some areas that must be covered in agreements:

    - Appropriate projects with necessary materials and supplies.
    - Supervision of enrollees.
    - Transportation.
    - Lodging (if needed).
    - Enrollee supplies and training.
    - Responsibility for safety, tort claims, and worker compensation.
    - Payroll responsibilities.
    - Procedures for transfer of funds between concerned agencies.

## CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSIONS

**"Nearly everybody in their life needs somebody to help them. I don't care if you are the greatest self-made man...The fact is, somebody has helped you along the way." Sargent Shriver**

The following conclusions were reached in writing this paper:

1. All civilizations have had some form of welfare and American society will continue to maintain numerous welfare programs.

2. Momentum has been building for over 30 years to include some form of "workfare" requirements into aid programs for able-bodied people receiving aid.

3. Self-reliance is part of our American culture and that character will be reflected in future programs.

4. Forest Service budgets will continue to shrink in the near future while use of public lands will continue to increase due to population growth.

5. The Forest Service will continue to develop Human Resource Programs (HRP) in an effort to do more with less and to involve the public in the administration of natural resources.

6. Cooperative agreements with other agencies that have similar interests are fairly easy to develop, cost effective, and beneficial for the participants.

7. The private sector cannot provide the amount of necessary work sites for the level of community service positions that are now being mandated.

8. HRP programs are not free. They require careful, thoughtful management.

9. Local staff and coworkers must have ownership in local programs for the programs to work.

10. Expect and plan on having the normal HRP problems in your program.

11. As the welfare reform debate evolves, the paradoxes of human nature will be present. Recognizing these paradoxes will provide ideas for creative solutions.

The current direction that welfare reform will take nationally is uncertain, especially on the issues of increasing the minimum wage, affordable child care, and affordable health care. What is more certain is that there will be numerous opportunities to involve disadvantaged citizens in the management of natural resources, to help people to help themselves, and to improve the quality of life in your community by helping others to "get back on their feet".

## EPILOGUE

**"In and through community lies the salvation of the world." M. Scott Peck**

Ecosystem management is an idea that has developed in the Forest Service because we, as an agency, recognize the "web-of-life". Similarly, Ghandi once observed, in regards to personal behavior, **"Everthing is connected - you cannot do good in only one area and ignore the others."**

One of the *personal conclusions* that I reached in completing this project and pondering the nature and role of community is that when we solve the paradoxical questions that are presented by welfare reform, we will have also solved many of the paradoxical questions that are presented by examination of human's role in "ecosystem management".

Chief Justice William Douglas once observed, **"The soul of man, given time, can put some revealing marks upon his face. The soul of a people invariably makes an indelible print upon their land."** One way the soul of a people is revealed is how they help people who are in need. When American society develops a better consensus on how to help people in need, we will have a much deeper understanding of what it means to be a community. With this improved sense of community, there will be a lot less debate and anger, and a lot less wasted human potential. Our improved sense of community will also be reflected in the gentler "marks" we leave upon the land.

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